



Governor's Office for Children and Families

QUARTER 2

NOVEMBER 2011

Meet Our Staff

Katie Jo Ballard
Executive Director

Cora Alexander
System of Care Coordinator

Jo Ann Berry
Finance Director

Dahlia Bell Brown
Family Violence Research Analyst

Thorne Brown
Family Violence Finance Officer

Robert Clark
Special Projects Coordinator

Sarah Dempsey
Family Violence Training Coordinator

Pat Holloway
Family Violence Grants Specialist

Hayley Howell
Deputy Finance Director

Heather McDaniel
*Youth Development Program
Coordinator*

Quincie McKibben
Youth Development Finance Officer

Frances Milton
Prevention Finance Officer

Raelene Noles
Community Partnership Coordinator

Keith Parkhouse
Juvenile Justice Detention Monitor

Alicia Parks
Abstinence Education Grants Monitor

Danielle Ruedt
Family Violence Program Coordinator

Helena Schneide
Administrative Assistant

Carole Steele
Prevention Programs Coordinator

Joe Vignati
Justice Programs Coordinator

Quarterly Newsletter

GOCF Welcomes New Staff and Board Chair!



The Governor's Office for Children and Families is pleased to welcome Katie Jo Ballard as our new Executive Director! Her knowledge and experience with high-level planning, management, and implementation as the former Director of Constituent Services, as well as her background in public health ensures that

she will provide critical support to local communities. Responsive service to Georgia's citizens permeates Katie Jo's vision for GOCF to equip partners with the resources necessary to best serve Georgia.

Also, GOCF is delighted to announce that the First Lady of Georgia, Mrs. Sandra Deal, will now serve as chair of our Advisory Board! After years of experience as an educator, Mrs. Deal has been dedicated to the State of Georgia through her civic engagement, volunteerism, and passion for service. Mrs. Deal is committed empowering communities to create successful and sustainable programs for the children and families of Georgia.



Thorne Brown (top left), Jo Ann Berry (top right), Hayley Howell (left photo).

In addition to a new director and board chair, GOCF is proud to also welcome three new additions to its finance team.

Jo Ann Berry will serve as our Finance Director. She is joining us from the Governor's Office for Work Force Development. Her

experience as Deputy Director, External Affairs will be a valuable asset as she serves on our team as our new Finance Director.

Hayley Howell is serving as our new Deputy Finance Director. She is joining us from the Governor's Office and brings strong research skills and community knowledge from serving in Executive Appointments.

Thorne Brown obtained his finance degree from the University of Georgia. He will be serving as our Family Violence Finance Officer.

The Governor's Office for Children and Families is thrilled to have all new agency members as part of our team!



DATES TO REMEMBER:

Educator's Conference:
Nov 30, 2011—Dec 2, 2011
Atlanta, GA

CSEC Task Force Meeting:
Dec 8, 2011 – Clayton State

GOCF Advisory Board Members

First Lady, Sandra Deal,
Chair
Judge Steve Teske,
Vice Chair

Andy Barclay
John Bowden
Gaylyn Cole
Ken Dobbs
Rachel Ewald
Michelle Girtman
Brittany Jean
Mika Kawana
Shaquita Ogletree
Linda Parker
Gene Pope
Dan Provence
Kathy Schrader
Michele Smith
Duane Whitley

We Unite and Empower Communities So They Can Unite and Empower Families

First Lady, Sandra Deal Unveils New Juvenile Crime Tracking Website

First Lady Sandra Deal cut the ribbon and was the inaugural visitor to Georgia's new Juvenile Justice Data Clearinghouse on September 27, 2011. This new public website is the direct result of the collaborative efforts of several state agencies including the [Council of Juvenile Court Judges](#), [Department of Juvenile Justice](#), [Georgia Bureau of Investigation](#), [Georgia Public Defender Standards Council](#), [Governor's Office for Children and Families](#), as well as the Carl Vinson Institute of Government. Data collected on the new website helps Georgia meet U.S. Department of Justice requirements for tracking and reporting juvenile crime information.

The Juvenile Justice Data Clearinghouse website may be accessed at: <http://georgiajuveniledata.ga.gov/>



First Lady, Sandra Deal with GOCF Executive Director, Katie Jo Ballard (on right), Special Projects Coordinator, Robert Clark (on far left), and Joe Vignati (on far right), Justice Programs Coordinator.

GOCF Secures \$8.6 Million for Home Visiting Efforts for Georgia

The Governor's Office for Children and Families awarded home visiting grants to communities after securing over \$8.6 million for home visitation efforts for the state of Georgia through the federal Maternal, Infant and Early Childhood Home Visiting (MIECHV) Grant Program. Partners in this effort include: the Department of Public Health, Department of Education, Department of Human Services, Department of Behavioral Health and Developmental Disabilities, the Department of Early Care and Learning, and the Georgia Family Connection Partnership. Georgia has an opportunity for collaboration and partnership at the State and community level that will improve health and development outcomes for our most at-risk children and families through evidence-based home visiting programs. The overall goal of Georgia's MIECHV Program is to improve child and family outcomes by implementing evidence-based home visiting as a major strategy within an Early Childhood System of Care. Part of the dollars to support this initiative will go towards the development of a statewide Central Intake and Referral System in order to strengthen Georgia's capacity to identify all children and families at risk.

GOCF Community Grant Awards

The Governor's Office for Children and Families currently provides 128 community-based service grant awards throughout the state of Georgia. A total of \$22,462,708 in grants are awarded to communities to support programs that have a statewide impact on juvenile justice, youth development and abstinence education, family violence, child abuse and neglect prevention, and system-of-care.

New Community Grants Awarded

Recently, GOCF announced six (6) new community-based Maternal, Infant and Early Childhood Home Visiting (MIECHV) Grant Awards. The grant awards totaled \$1,794,513 and were given to communities all across Georgia.

Also among new grants recently announced, GOCF awarded twelve (12) new grants to support System of Care programs. The grant awards totaled \$1,982,956 and were given to communities all across Georgia.

Continuation Community Grants Awarded

GOCF awarded five (5) continuation grants to support programs throughout the state that promote greater accountability in the juvenile justice systems. The grant awards total \$999,807 and were given to communities all across Georgia.

Along with those grants, GOCF announced twenty (20) Year 2 Abstinence Education and Youth Development Program Awards. These abstinence focused grant awards total \$1,682,461 and were given to communities all across Georgia.

To find resources in your community that the Governor's Office for Children and Families funds, please visit the complete list of GOCF's FY2012 grant awards by [clicking here](#) or visit www.children.ga.gov.

Wilson Reading System Makes Positive Changes in Teen's Life

Hall County Board of Commissioners was awarded a System of Care grant by Governor's Office for Children and Families in 2010. One of their programs utilizes the Wilson Reading System. Recently, this program was applauded in the spring 2011 edition of *The Decoder* for the positive changes it has made in a teen's life. According to *The Decoder*, 14 year old Brittany of Gainesville, Georgia was having issues with academics and truancy until she was referred to the WRS tutoring program by the juvenile court system. Once she entered the program, she became a "highly motivated student" as well as a "confident reader and speller." Brittany also entered into WRS's mentoring program and is working to develop additional academic and social skills. Brittany now plans to continue her education and wants to become a nurse.

Congratulations to the Hall County Board of Commissioners and the Wilson Reading System!

-To view article about the Wilson Reading System and Brittany's positive changes, see the spring 2011 edition of *The Decoder*.

GOCF and First Lady Travel Statewide to Support Grantees



GOCF, the First Lady, and Dr. Barge visit students in Clarke County.



In an initiative to support community efforts, Executive Director Ballard and First Lady Deal have been traveling the State to visit GOCF's grantees. With only two months in office, GOCF's new director and board chair have already traveled to over 12 grant sites as far south as Waycross and as far north as Gainesville.

Many County Commissioners, State Agency heads, State Representatives, Mayors and other local officials have joined them on their visits to show their support. The collaboration between the state and local officials has been invaluable to the success of these community sites.

Travels continued with a partnership between the Department of Education. State School Superintendent Dr. John Barge has also traveled with the First Lady

and Director. They have traveled to three sites thus far and have 6 more sites scheduled to visit together in November. The Governor's Office for Children and Families has many programs that serve school aged children. Dr. Barge has showed his support and gratitude for the mentoring and tutoring programs GOCF funds in many communities. The interagency collaboration and commitment to community support has had a tremendous impact.



Also, in an effort to highlight October as Domestic Violence month, the First Lady and Mrs. Ballard visited five domestic violence shelters and sexual

assault centers throughout the state. They also participated in a banquet to honor the tremendous work of shelter volunteers in Waycross.



First Lady and Dr. Barge visit with school principle in Clarke County (top right photo). Student photo during Clark County visit (bottom left photo).



Family violence grantee, Satilla Advocacy Center (top left photo); System of Care grantee, Hall County Board of Commissioners (middle right photo); Family violence grantee, Magnolia House (bottom photo).

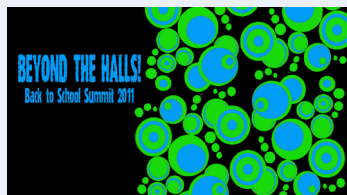
To find out which grant sites GOCF and the First Lady will visit next, please visit www.children.ga.gov.

"GOCF is not just here to fund programs. It is also our mission to empower communities and share their voices."

- Executive Director, Katie Jo Ballard

GOCF Trainings & Conferences

2011 Beyond the Halls! Back to School Summit Encourages Abstinence and Youth Development Through Empowerment



The Governor's Office for Children and Families hosted the 2011 Beyond the Halls! Back to School Youth Summit on Saturday, September 10, 2011 in Macon, Georgia. Held at Christ Chapel Sportstowne, the Beyond the Halls! Summit was attended by over 750 youth, including middle and high school-aged students from across the state. Throughout the day, presentations and activities by motivational speakers and youth programs excited young people about their power to achieve future goals by making

healthy decisions today. The event focused on anti-bullying messages, abstaining from alcohol, tobacco, other substances, and sexual activity, the importance of education, and the value of respecting yourself and others. Overall, 99% of survey respondents rated the conference as either very good or excellent, and 98% reported an increase in knowledge as a result of their attendance. A very sincere thank you goes out to those grantees and community programs who joined us for the conference as well as the volunteers and speakers who made the day a huge success. As one of our youth participants shared, "I loved the Summit and can't wait until next year's event!"

For those organizations that could not attend the Youth Summit, it has been recorded for use as a teaching tool. To view the recording of the summit, please visit [click here](#). Also, please check our website for spring 2012 youth summit dates.

Educator's Conference

This year's conference, "*Motivate, Innovate, Integrate*" will be held November 30 – December 2 at the Atlanta Marriot Century Center in Atlanta, GA. This three day conference for educators will cover topics such as abstinence education, parent involvement, innovative strategies for hard to reach youth, and fundraising strategies. "*Motivate, Innovate, Integrate*": The Governor's Office for Children & Families Educators' Conference will bring together some of the best known speakers, trainers and educators in youth development, abstinence education, prevention and more to provide you with a high quality, interactive and engaging conference experience that allows you to take back achievable practices that will foster positive outcomes in the children and youth you serve. To register, [click here](#).

CSEC Task Force Meetings

The Georgia CSEC Task Force, convened by the Governor's Office for Children and Families, was created in 2008 to work collaboratively to end the commercial sexual exploitation of children by developing and implementing prevention, protection and prosecution strategies. The task force meets on a quarterly basis and is comprised of representatives from state, local, federal government, law enforcement, victim service providers, and non-governmental organizations. For more information and upcoming meeting dates, send an email to Danielle.Ruedt@children.ga.gov.

Mental Health Training Series on Commercial Sexual Exploitation of Children

This one-day session is intended to increase awareness of CSEC (Commercial Sexual Exploitation of Children) and the needs of its victims. It is aimed at service providers, especially child and adolescent mental health providers. This goals of this session are to building a greater understanding of CSEC victims, teach how identify potential CSEC victims, link victims to resources, and exhibit patience and understanding when engaging potential victims.

Participants are eligible to receive 6 hours of CEUs from NASW or LPCA for free. To find out more information about this training or to register, send an email to Sarah.Dempsey@children.ga.gov.

Online Training Series for Georgia Medical Professionals on CSEC

This web-based training series is presented by the Governor's Office for Children and Families and The Children's Healthcare of Atlanta Stephanie V. Blank Center for Safe and Healthy Children. The series aims to educate Georgia medical professionals on the commercial sexual exploitation of children (CSEC). The series includes four individual modules on CSEC-related topics which will be presented via live webinars. For a training schedule or more information on the webinars and how to access them, send an email to Jennifer.Felner@choa.org.